



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS  
3280 RUSSELL ROAD  
QUANTICO, VIRGINIA 22134-5103

MCO 1560.21D  
MMEA-85  
7 Apr 99

MARINE CORPS ORDER 1560.21D

From: Commandant of the Marine Corps  
To: Distribution List

Subj: STAFF NONCOMMISSIONED OFFICERS DEGREE COMPLETION PROGRAM

Ref: (a) MCO 5311.1C  
(b) MCO 1326.6C  
(c) MCO P1070.12J  
(d) MCO P1080.40A

Encl: (1) Two-Year Advanced Standing Definition  
(2) Sample Application  
(3) Sample Academic Certification Form

1. Purpose. To set forth the policies and procedures governing the Staff Noncommissioned Officers Degree Completion Program (SNCODCP) and provide guidance for application.

2. Cancellation. MCO 1560.21C

3. Background

a. The SNCODCP is based upon the need for staff noncommissioned officers with skills in specific educational disciplines above those associated with normal grade and MOS requirements.

b. The program provides staff noncommissioned officers an opportunity to obtain baccalaureate degrees which fulfill Marine Corps requirements, and concurrently satisfy personal educational goals.

c. The SNCODCP will not be considered an officer candidate program, nor a screening process for any Marines requesting selection in any enlisted commissioning program.

4. Summary of Revisions. This order has been revised and contains the following changes.

a. Change to the eligibility requirements. Para. 6a(2).

b. Gives guidance for Marines who are in receipt of or eligible for the Selected Reenlistment Bonus Program. Para. 6a(8).

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c. Amplifies the specific requirements and obligation incurred by 5821 or 0211 AMOS polygrapher applicants. Para. 7d.

d. Changes the mailing address for applications. Para. 8a.

e. Extends the dates for submission of applications. Para. 8a.

f. Gives guidance for additional application requirements if applying for polygrapher assignment. Para. 8e.

g. Formalizes the routing of applications during the selection process. Para. 11c.

h. Instructs Administrative commands to administer the semiannual Physical Fitness Test to Marines as part of the application process. Para. 13c(2)(c).

5. Concepts. The goal of the SNCODCP is to provide qualified staff noncommissioned officers to fill specific billets requiring baccalaureate degree/4-year level college training and maintain an inventory of staff noncommissioned officers trained in specialized areas to meet requirements within the Marine Corps. The training provided to staff noncommissioned officers within this program will be the minimum requisite education necessary to meet billet requirements. Billet requirements are established, updated, and validated through Billet Education Evaluation Certificates (BEECs) and Table of Organization and Equipment (T/O&E) change requests. Detailed submission procedures are provided in reference (a).

## 6. Eligibility

a. Applicants must:

(1) Be regular active duty Marines.

(2) Be in the grade of staff sergeant through master sergeant and have the potential and motivation to become a sergeant major/master gunnery sergeant. First sergeants are not eligible.

(3) Have sufficient college credits to obtain a baccalaureate degree within 18 months on campus. Only the minimum period necessary to meet degree requirements will be authorized. Continuous attendance, including summer sessions, is mandatory to ensure on campus time is minimized.

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(4) Have successfully completed all entrance examinations and been accepted by a regionally accredited degree granting college/university in a program offered to all matriculating students. Enrollment in a multiple major program designed for adults returning to school does not qualify.

(5) Must possess an Associates Degree or have at least 2 years advanced standing towards a baccalaureate degree by the accredited college/university. Enclosure (1) defines the required composition.

(6) Have been accepted in a degree program leading to a baccalaureate degree required to fill a specific discipline listed in the Marine Corps bulletin announcing the selection board to which the Marine is petitioning.

(7) Have a single major study area with a minimum of 24 semester hours, in that area, upon graduation. Multiple majors will not be authorized.

(8) Marines who are in receipt of a Selected Reenlistment Bonus or eligible for the Selected Reenlistment Bonus Program are not eligible.

(9) Be eligible to be a polygraph examiner if applying for a degree in Criminal Justice, Psychology, and Computer Science/Studies (5821 [0211]).

#### 7. Obligation Incurred

a. Applicants must agree to extend/reenlist for a period of 4 years beyond completion of the SNCODCP. This is in addition to any obligation previously incurred. Reenlistment/extension will be effected upon notification that a Marine has been selected for the program. It will be completed prior to being ordered to school.

b. Marines who have attended a formal military school in excess of 20 weeks are not eligible for the SNCODCP until previous obligation has been served.

c. Request for separation from the service while participating in and within the obligated active service, subsequent to completion of the SNCODCP, will not normally receive favorable consideration.

d. The 5821 and 0211 AMOS applicant who desires to complete the preferred undergraduate degree in Criminal Justice, Psychology, or Computer Science/Studies must voluntarily submit

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to and pass a polygraph examination to meet the prerequisites for the AMOS 5822 or 0211. There are 5 billets within the Marine Corps for AMOS 5822.

8. Application

a. Eligible Marines who desire to participate in this program will submit an application consisting of an original and two copies in the format contained in enclosure (2) to:

Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps  
Manpower and Reserve Affairs (MMEA-85)  
3280 Russell Road  
Quantico, Va 22134

Applications will be submitted between 1 March and 15 June annually. Application receipt will be acknowledged if a self-addressed and stamped card is submitted with the application.

b. The Academic Certification Form (enclosure (3)) will be the first enclosure to the basic application. It must contain the list of courses required to obtain a baccalaureate degree and will include the course name, number, and credit hours (semester or quarter) for each course. NOTE: If this enclosure is not complete, the Marine's application will not be considered by the selection board.

c. Official transcripts of all work from each college/university previously attended must be forwarded as part of the application or forwarded directly to CMC (MMEA-85) by the college/university.

d. Participation in the program will normally commence after the completion of a prescribed overseas tour or a 3-year CONUS tour. Exceptions will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

e. Any 5821 or 0211 AMOS that does not wish to be considered for a polygrapher assignment should include the following statement in his/her application (enclosure 2 paragraph 7). "If not applying to be a polygraph examiner, I wish to be considered for the following course of study \_\_\_\_\_ which I understand will incur a 3 year obligation in a 9917 specialized billet, outside of my PMOS, if found qualified and selected."

9. Application Withdrawal. Marines no longer desiring consideration for the SNCODCP will request application withdrawal via naval message to the CMC (MMEA-85).

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#### 10. Local Screening Boards

a. Commanding officers in the chain of command having special court-martial authority will convene a screening board to determine the applicant's qualifications. The board will consist of three officers who possess, at a minimum, a baccalaureate degree and one staff noncommissioned officer senior in grade to the applicant.

b. The commanding officers' endorsements will contain the recommendation of the screening board and other pertinent personal comments to assist the board in the selection process.

c. Commanding officers will request that any pending PCS orders be held in abeyance pending the results of the selection process.

d. Commanding officers will screen applicants per enclosure (3) of reference (b).

#### 11. Selection Process

a. The Director, Personnel Management Division (CMC (MM)) will convene a board annually at HQMC to review applications and select Marines for assignment to the program.

b. Selection will be based on the following factors:

(1) Career potential.

(2) Previous academic record.

(3) Off duty education accomplishments.

(4) Demonstrated ability to academically perform at a "B" grade level or equivalent in the major study area for at least 6 semester hours or 9 quarter hours.

(5) Most qualified.

(6) Billet vacancies

c. All applications will be routed through MMEA and MPP-20 for comments/recommendations prior to commencement of the board.

12. Notification. The names of applicants selected for the program will be announced in a Marine Corps bulletin.

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### 13. Administration of the Marines on the Program

#### a. Requirements

(1) The applicant's program will be arranged so that the majority (75 percent) of the on campus work during the last year is in upper level course work.

(2) Each participant must carry a minimum of 15 semester hours or the equivalent of units of study required of full-time undergraduate day students. If attending a summer term, or two 5 week sessions, the participant must enroll in 6 semester hours or the equivalent each session. If attending the 8-week summer session, the participant must enroll for at least 9 semester hours or the equivalent.

#### b. Funding and Orders

(1) Participating Marines will receive their regular pay and allowances. Tuition, matriculation fees, and other expenses, such as books, will be paid by the individual through personal funds, in-service G.I. Bill benefits, student loans, or other non-Marine Corps means.

(2) Marines assigned to school under this program for a period of 20 weeks or more will be issued permanent change of station orders to the school concerned. Marines will be entitled to the usual reimbursement for travel, transportation of dependents, and other allowances authorized by the Joint Federal Travel Regulations. Participating Marines will be attached to the nearest Marine Corps command for administrative purposes.

(3) Marines assigned to school under this program, for a period of less than 20 weeks, will normally be issued permanent change of station orders to a new duty station and will attend college in a temporary duty status en route. Participants will be entitled to the usual reimbursements for travel to and from college; however, entitlement to shipment of household goods, transportation of dependents, and dislocation allowance will be determined on the same basis as that on which entitlements to these items is determined for other Marines ordered to temporary duty en route between permanent duty stations.

(4) In some instances, those attending school for less than 20 weeks will be ordered on temporary additional duty from and return to their present duty stations.

(5) Marines will not be entitled to per diem allowances while attending school under this program.

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c. Records and Reports

(1) Marines selected for the program will provide, in writing, the following information to the CMC (MMEA-85) as soon as it becomes available:

(a) Address and telephone number of the Marine's college residence.

(b) Any change in original graduation date.

(c) Notice of failure to maintain satisfactory academic status. To be considered satisfactory, the participant must meet college residency requirements and must be eligible for admission into each semester/quarter. A grade point average below "C" level for any grading period is considered unsatisfactory.

(d) Notice of failure to meet course requirements or any other degree requirements by the end of the period assigned to this program. The report will include the reasons for the failure and plans for making up the requirement.

(e) A grade report at the end of each semester/quarter and summer session.

(f) An official transcript of final grades and a photostatic copy of the diploma earned.

(2) Administrative commands will:

(a) Notify this Headquarters (MMEA-85) at least 90 days in advance of the date the individual will graduate/be available for transfer.

(b) Record appropriate graduation entries in the individual's service record book and make appropriate unit diary entries per reference (c) and (d).

(c) Administer the semiannual Physical Fitness Test.

(d) Ensure annual audits are complete.

14. Post Graduation Assignment Policy

a. Upon completion of degree requirements, the participant will be assigned a new primary or an additional MOS, as

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appropriate, commensurate with the participant's area of specialization.

b. Assignment to the initial utilization tour will be to a specific billet by T/O and line number. This assignment is made by a board of officers at HQMC, convened by the Head, Enlisted Assignment Branch, Personnel Management Division, Manpower and Reserve Affairs Department (MMEA).

c. Assignment after completion of the initial utilization (payback) tour will be made in accordance with the needs of the Marine Corps and the individual's preferences.

15. Dissemination. Commanding officers are directed to widely disseminate this Order and encourage qualified Marines to apply.

16. Reserve Applicability. This Order is not applicable to the Marine Corps Reserve.



R. M. FLANAGAN  
By direction

DISTRIBUTION: PCN 10201990500

Copy to: 7000110 (55)  
8145004, 005 (2)  
7000144/8145001 (1)



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TWO-YEAR ADVANCED STANDING DEFINITION

Two-year advanced standing is defined as:

1. 60 semester hours (SH) or 90 quarter hours (QH) credit. (1 semester hour equals 1 and 1/2 half quarter hours.) Of this 60 SH/90 QH, at least 20 SH/30 QH must be classroom work successfully completed at a civilian college or university.

2. The remaining 40 SH/60 QH may be comprised of additional classroom work, test (CLEP, USAFI, and DANTES examinations), correspondence courses, and formal military school and military service credit. It may not include more than 30 SH/45 QH combined formal military school and military service credit. The maximum military service allowed is 12 SH/18 QH. No additional military service credit will be accepted to meet either the minimum two year requirement of 60 SH/90 QH, or for additional credit beyond the required 2-year advanced standing.

ENCLOSURE (1)

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SAMPLE APPLICATION

From: \_\_\_\_\_

To: Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, M&amp;RA (MMEA-85)

Via: \_\_\_\_\_

Subj: REQUEST FOR ASSIGNMENT TO THE STAFF NONCOMMISSIONED  
OFFICERS DEGREE COMPLETION PROGRAM

Ref: (a) MCO 1560.21D

Encl: (1) Academic Certification Form  
(2) Official Transcripts of College Credits  
(3) List of Courses, if not included in enclosure (1)

1. In accordance with the reference, I request duty at (Name of Regionally Accredited College/University) from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ to complete undergraduate work required for a baccalaureate degree. If the school cannot provide the starting, completing, and reporting dates in enclosure (1) at the time the application is submitted, I will obtain such dates in writing from the school, when available, and submit them to the Commandant of the Marine Corps (MMEA-85). I certify that the above period represents the minimum time required for completion of undergraduate work through full-time school attendance. Enclosure (1) is certification by the school that I can complete all the work required for the baccalaureate degree during the specified period.

2. I have completed \_\_\_ semester or \_\_\_ quarter hours of undergraduate work at an accredited institution(s). I expect to have completed \_\_\_ hours of such work through off-duty study while in the Marine Corps. Enclosure (2) is a transcript of my college credits from each school previously attended.

3. (Each applicant will explain in this paragraph how the desired course of study relates to his/her MOS or to an MOS to which he/she desires a lateral move.)

4. My present duty station is: \_\_\_\_\_.

The date joined this command is: \_\_\_\_\_.

5. My DSN number is: \_\_\_\_\_.

ENCLOSURE (2)

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6. I agree not to request transfer to the Fleet Marine Corps Reserve while participating in the SNCODCP. I further agree to remain on active duty, after completion of degree requirements, for a period of 4 years. I understand the foregoing obligation is in addition to any obligation previously incurred.

7. I am/am not an applicant for a degree in criminal justice, psychology, or computer science/studies. If I am, I certify that I have been screened and found qualified to be a polygraph operator. If not applying to be a polygraph examiner (PMOS 5822 or 0211), I wish to be considered for the following course of study \_\_\_\_\_ which I understand will incur a 3 year obligation in a 9917 specified billet, outside of my PMOS, if found qualified and selected.

4-by 5-inch Print  
Full-Length  
Front View

4-by 5-inch Print  
Full-Length  
Profile

Date Taken \_\_\_\_\_  
Height \_\_\_\_\_ Weight \_\_\_\_\_  
PFT Score \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of Applicant)

ENCLOSURE (2)

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SAMPLE ACADEMIC CERTIFICATION FORM

To: Headquarters U.S. Marine Corps  
 Manpower and Reserve Affairs (MMEA-85)  
 3280 Russell Road  
 Quantico, VA 22134

(Date) \_\_\_\_\_

NAME OF PROSPECTIVE STUDENT \_\_\_\_\_. I certify that above named staff noncommissioned officer can complete this institution's requirements for a baccalaureate degree through full-time school attendance from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_. The student should report to the school for registration and processing by \_\_\_\_\_. Completion of degree requirements is contingent upon normal progress and satisfactory completion of work. The above specified dates represent the minimum period required by the student to complete the remaining \_\_\_\_\_ hours of undergraduate work. Evaluation of total credit given is based on \_\_\_\_\_ hours for courses previously completed with civilian schools to include \_\_\_\_\_ hours transferred from \_\_\_\_\_; \_\_\_\_\_ hours transferred from \_\_\_\_\_; \_\_\_\_\_ hours for military schools completed; \_\_\_\_\_ hours for military service; \_\_\_\_\_ hours for USAFI courses, and \_\_\_\_\_ hours for CLEP equivalency tests. The subject's major is \_\_\_\_\_ and, on completion of the following schedule of courses at this institution during \_\_\_\_\_, he/she will be granted a \_\_\_\_\_ degree with a major in \_\_\_\_\_. Following are the courses required for graduation:

<u>COURSE NUMBER</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>SEMESTER HOURS</u>
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(The majority (75 percent) of the on campus work during the last year should be upper level courses.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
SIGNATURE\_\_\_\_\_  
TITLE/POSITIONNOTE: PLEASE AFFIX SCHOOL SEAL OVER SIGNATURE

If courses are to be completed by the individual prior to entry, do not include in the above figures but indicate below: (All course work needed to meet the minimum 2-year requirement must be completed and accepted by the institution prior to the submission of this certificate.)

ENCLOSURE (3)